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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PNAT](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: ZEBARI DISCUSSES PM CANDIDATES AND CABINET  
POSITIONS.

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Robert S.  
Ford for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

1.(C) On January 26, Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari told PolOff that Fadhila Party Leader Nadim al-Jabiri's bid for Prime Minister is misguided. According to Zebari, al-Jabiri has yet to approach the Kurds with a deal. From his conversations with several members of the Kurdish leadership, Zebari said they consider al-Jabiri the wrong man for the job because he lacks government experience. Zebari added that al-Jabiri's push for the premiership has TNA Deputy Speaker al-Shahrastani making a serious bid for the position as well. Zebari said that Shahrastani would have a better chance than al-Jabiri of becoming PM.

12. (C) Regarding cabinet positions, Zebari said that the agreement between PUK Jalal Talabani and KDP Masoud Barzani remains intact. Zebari deflected the question of his own aspirations in the new government and re-emphasized that the agreement between Talabani and Barzani does not allow for current Planning Minister Barham Saleh to become Foreign Minister, i.e. leaving Zebari in the Foreign Minister position. Zebari claims to have told the Shia Coalition leaders that the Alliance has the right to choose the Prime Minister without interference from the Kurds, indicated that the Kurds prefer current Deputy President and SCIRI member Adil Abd' al-Madhi over current Prime Minister Ibrahim Ja'afari.  
KHALILZAD